

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 17210 282025Z
ACTION EUR-12

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-----123980 282150Z /64
R 281315Z NOV 77
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4982
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

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FOR EUR SOV

E. 9. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINS UR US CSCE OTRA
SUBJECT: TRAVEL OF CONSUL GENERAL

REFS: (A) 74 LENINGRAD 392, (B) 74 LENINGRAD 240

1. THE QUESTION HAS ARISESN WHETHER CONSUL GENERAL
BUCHANAN IS ENTITLED TO NOTE-FREE TRAVEL TO OPEN CITIES
WITHING THE SOVIET UNION, PARTICULARLY MOSCOW.

2. CONGEN LENINGRAD'S FILE INDICATES THATBUCHANAN'S
PREDECESSOR NEUBERT:
--HAD TRAVELLED AT LEAST ONCE TO MOSCOW WITHOUT
SUBMITTING A TRAVEL NOTE;
--HAD DONE SO BASED ON NEUBERT'S INTERPRETATION
THAT NOTE-FREE TRAVEL PROVISIONS OF THE MFA NOTE TO EMBASSIES
OF FEBRUARY 18, 1974 APPLIED TO CONSULS GENERAL
AS WELL AS AMBASSADORS AND CHARGES D'AFFAIRES; AND
--HAD BASED THIS ON ORAL DISCUSSIONS WITH
DIPLOMATIC AGENCY, IN WHICH IT APPEARS
BOTH SIDES MAY HAVE BEEN TALKING PAST EACHOTHER IN
AFFIRMING THAT THE NOTE ALSO APPLIED TO CONSULAR
EMPLOYEES (REF A).

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3. BASED ON WHAT APPEARED TO BE PRECEDENT,
IN ARRANGING HIS NOVEMBER 24-27 TRIP
TO MOSCOW FOR CONSULTATIONS BUCHANAN DID NOT
INITIALLY SUBMIT A TRAVEL NOTE. ON NOVEMBER 24
OFFICIALS IN LENINGRAD REFUSED TO ISSUE HIM TICKETS
WITHOUT AUTHORIZATION OF THE LENINGRAD DIPLOMATIC

AGENCY, WHICH SUBSEQUENTLY INFORMED HIM THAT THE FEBRUARY 18, 1974 MFA NOTE DID NOT APPLY TO CONSULS GENERAL AND THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO SUBMIT A TRAVEL NOTE.

4. AT BUCHANAN'S REQUEST THE POLITICAL COUNSEL FOR CONTACTED STEPANOV, COUNSEL FOR IN MFA'S PROTOCOL SECTION, WHO AFTER SEVERAL HOURS OF CONSULTATION GAVE THE "DEFINITIVE POSITION" THAT THE NOTE-FREE TRAVEL PROVISIONS OF THE 1974 MFA NOTE APPLY ONLY TO AMBASSADORS AND CHARGES D'AFFAIRES AND NOT TO CONSULS GENERAL. BUCHANAN CHECKED WITH THE FINNISH DOYEN OF THE LENINGRAD CONSULAR CORPS WHOSE PERSONAL OPINION WAS THAT A TRAVEL NOTE SHOULD BE SUBMITTED "AS A MATTER OF COURTESY" (WHICH SUGGESTS TO US THAT THERE IS NO OTHER PRECEDENT AMONG LENINGRAD CONSULAR GENERAL FOR NOTE-FREE TRAVEL).

4. IN THE END, DIPLOMATIC AGENCY AGREED THAT ORAL DISCUSSIONS WITH BUCHANAN OF UP-COMING TRIP COULD CONSTITUTE NOTIFICATION, AND ISSUED TICKETS, BUT PROMISED TO RETURN TO THIS ISSUE.

5. COMMENT: IN REVIEWING THIS MATTER ALL OF US, INCLUDING BUCHANAN, FEEL THAT WE HAVE AN EXTREMELY WEAK CASE WITH WHICH TO REOPEN THE MATTER, BUT BEFORE DROPPING IT COMPLETELY WE WANT TO BE CERTAIN THAT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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STRICT RECIPROCITY IS BEING OBSERVED. WE BELIEVE THAT THE SOVIET CONSUL GENERAL DOES NOT ENJOY NOTE-FREE TRAVEL TO OPEN US CITIES AND AREAS, BUT WOULD APPRECIATE CONFIRMATION FROM THE DEPARTMENT ASAP AND, IF POSSIBLE A REVIEW OF SOVIET CONSUL GENERAL'S TRAVEL IN PAST SIX MONTHS FOR COMPARISON PURPOSES.

6. WE WOULD ALSO WELCOME THE DEPARTMENT'S GENERAL VIEWS ON THE MATTER, WHICH WILL OF COURSE HAVE A BEARING ON THE TRAVEL OF OUR FUTURE CONSUL GENERAL IN KIEV AND THE SOVIET CONSUL GENERAL IN NEW YORK.
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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